



City of Columbus  
Mayor Michael B. Coleman

## Department of Development

Boyce Safford, III - Director

### Building Services Division

757 Carolyn Avenue  
Columbus, Ohio 43224-3218  
(614) 645-7433 (614) 645-7840 FAX

***September 21, 2009***

## **Construction Industry Communication #25**

**From: Keith Wagenknecht, Chief Building Official**

**Re: Residential Sales Office Building Permit and Time-Limited/Final  
Occupancy Procedures**

**Requirements:** A Residential Sales Office requires similar building and Certificate Occupancy permitting processes as those of new, single-family dwellings, PLUS a Time-Limited Certificate of Occupancy (TLO).

**Background:** In order to more effectively monitor permits and issue Time-Limited and Final Certificates of Occupancy, the Columbus Building Services Division (BSD) has implemented procedures regarding the construction and use of single-family dwelling units used as a Residential Sales Office.

BSD defines a Residential Sales Office as:

- one or more single-family dwelling units constructed to function as a sales office for the purpose of display and selling individual dwelling units.
- one or more dwelling units having a garage constructed as an office space wherein business is conducted.
- one or more dwelling units used for the representation of a style of house to be purchased and requires either interior and/or exterior modifications made to the dwelling unit or site to make-ready for the sale of the dwelling unit.

BSD defines a Model Home as:

- a completed dwelling unit having obtained a Final Certificate of Occupancy that is being used to display the house to the public and requires no interior or exterior alterations to be made for the sale of the dwelling unit.

**Memorandum:** A 'new construction' building permit, similar to the standard new home building permit, with applicable fees, will be issued for the construction of a Residential Sales Office. At this time, the applicant will also purchase a Time-Limited Occupancy (TLO) in accordance with the current Fee Schedule, which is valid for one (1) year, in accordance with the Columbus Zoning Code.

At the time of application, the applicant has the option to purchase additional 1-year TLO certificates not to exceed a total of five (5) years.

When construction is complete, in compliance with the approved plans and passes inspection(s), a Time-Limited Occupancy Certificate(s) will be issued, indicating the dwelling is permitted to be used as a Residential Sales Office for the yearly increments specified and purchased by the applicant.

A notice will be entered into BSD's computer system at the time of TLO issuance to alert the Chief Building Official that the TLO will expire 180 days prior to the end of the period specified (purchased) by the applicant. This will enable the CBO to notify the owner that they have one of two options to proceed:

--An alteration permit may be obtained to complete the work necessary to convert the Residential Sales Office to a single-family home as the TLO will expire on a given date and the dwelling can no longer be occupied as a sales office.

OR

--The Residential Sales Office permit can be renewed for ONE additional period of up to five (5) years maximum. The applicant will apply for a Minor Limited Scope of Work building permit and pay the appropriate permit fee in accordance with the current Fee Schedule. At the time of application, the applicant will pay the appropriate TLO fee for the yearly TLO increments specified (up to five years maximum). Subsequently, an inspection will be performed and if compliant, a TLO will be issued to allow the Residential Sales Office occupancy for the time period specified.

When the Residential Sales Office is no longer needed, alteration permits (structural, electrical, HVAC) will be required to convert the office to a garage and/or make other modifications to the interior or exterior. Work may include removing all additional electric, removing heat runs to the garage used as the sales office and the installation of garage doors, installation of sidewalks and/or driveways, etc.. *Prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for a dwelling unit, all work must pass inspection and permits 'finaled' by the building inspectors.*

#### RENEWAL OF A FORMERLY- ISSUED TEMPORARY CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY (TCO):

In order to renew a previously issued Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (TCO), the applicant will apply for a Minor Limited Scope of Work building permit and pay the appropriate permit fee in accordance with the current Fee Schedule. At the time of application, the applicant will also pay the appropriate Time-Limited Occupancy (TLO) fee for the yearly TLO increments specified (up to five years maximum). Subsequently, an inspection will be performed and, if compliant, a TLO will be issued to allow the Residential Sales Office occupancy for the time period specified.

At the end of the specified period, the dwelling unit must be altered to function as a single-family dwelling unit. Inspections will be performed and a final Certificate of Occupancy issued for the dwelling unit. If the home builder has neglected to renew the TCO, it, along with the original building permit, will have expired and the builder will be required to obtain:

- a structural Residential Sales Office permit as previously outlined
- OR
- an alteration permit as previously outlined.